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St. Germans Rural District Council.



MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S

REPORT

FOR 1925,

AND A

Survey of the District for the past Five Years.

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Medical Officer of Health.

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Medical Officer of Health's Report for 1925

ON THE

Health of the Rural District of St. Germans

AND A

Survey of the District for the past Five years.



GENTLEMEN,

NATIONAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The District of 45,287 acres is divided into 14 Parishes, which are all rural in character, many villages being too small to call by any other term. The country is bounded on one side by the sea, on another by the Hamoaze, a large sheet of tidal waters with considerable current. It is deeply indented in parts by these waters, which are lost as tidal and become rivers in the district. This makes the district very hilly and easily drained and sewered where necessary. The occupation of the inhabitants is chiefly agricultural, but on the coast some fishing is done, whilst Downton is used as a small summer resort. Adjacent to Plymouth, though still on the Cornish side of the Hamoaze, in St. Stephens and Millbrook, there is a considerable contingent of men who work in H.M. Dockyard at Devonport, and H.M. Magazines at Bull Point.

There are no Factories of any size.

In 1925 the common charges of this part of the St. Germans Union for Poor Law purposes were £10962 16s. 0d.

There is no condition prejudicial to health in the district from occupation or environment, always excepting the overcrowded condition of houses and people in part of Kingsand and Cawsand, and Millbrook.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (Acres)	...	...	...	45,287
Population	{ 1921 Census	...	...	12,265
	{ Computed for rates	...	...	12,060
Number of Inhabited houses, 1921	...	...	...
Number of Families, 1921	...	...	...
Rateable Value	...	...	£76718 10s. 6d.	
Sum represented by Penny Rate	...	...	£234	

All returns except Notifications of Infectious Diseases refer to Civilians only.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Number of Births	Males.	Females.	Total
Legitimate	100	100	200
Illegitimate	5	1	6
			206
Number of Deaths—			
Total in District	...	...	107
Corrected by transfer	...	...	136

Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 Births 48·5 compared with National rate 74·0

There were no deaths from Measles or Whooping Cough, Infectious but not Notifiable Diseases. Nor were there any deaths caused by Pregnancy or Parturition

	St. Germans	National
Birth Rate	17·0	18·3
Death Rate	11·2	12·2
Birth Rate (average for five years)	16·7	
Death Rate (average for five years)	13·59	

BIRTH AND DEATH RATES COMPARED WITH 157 SMALLER TOWNS.

		Birth Rate per 1000	Annual Death Rate per 1000									Rate per 1000 Births	
			All Causes.	Enteric.	Small Pox	Measles.	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence.	Diarrhoea, under 2 years.	Total Deaths, under 1 year.
St. Germans R.D.	...	17.0	11.2	...	...	...	...	...	...	.41	.5	4.8	48.5
157 Smaller Towns	...	18.3	11.2	.01	...	.15	.02	.14	.06	.31	.38	7.6	74

CAUSES OF DEATHS AND AGE INCIDENCE.

	M	F.	Under 1	1—2	2—5	5—15	15—25	25—45	45 65	65 up
Influenza	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	2
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Pulmonary Tubercle	4	7	...	...	...	2	2	5	2	...
Other	3	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer	10	19	...	...	...	...	...	2	7	20
Diabetes	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cerebral Hoemorrhage	...	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	6
Heart Disease	8	6	...	...	...	..	1	1	5	7
Arterio Sclerosis	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Bronchitis	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	..	...	2
Pneumonia	1	6	...	...	1	1	1	2	2	...
Other Respiratory Diseases	2	2	1	...	...	1	...	2	...	...
Ulcer of Stomach	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	..	...
Diarrhoea under 2	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Appendicitis	...	2	..	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
Cirrhosis of Liver	1	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	1	...
Nephritis	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Accidents of Pregnancy	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Congenital Debility	1	3	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Suicide	3	..	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1
Violence	1	3	...	1	1	...	2	...	...	...
Other Defined Diseases	18	12	..	...	...	...	2	4	10	14
Ill Defined Diseases	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	61	75	6	3	2	4	9	20	38	54

The Table is quite a favourable one. The Infantile deaths are low. Of those children who died at an age under twelve months, 4 died of congenital causes. None were due to bad feeding.

There were no deaths from the ordinary Notifiable and Infectious Diseases as Small Pox, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria or Typhoid, nor from the common but not Notifiable Disease Measles or Whooping Cough.

Influenza caused 5 deaths, 4 being of aged persons.

Encephalitis Lethargica, which may be classed as an Influenza and of very slight infectivity, if any, was the cause of death in one case.

Tubercle is about the same as a cause of death ; ours is very high for a Rural District.

Cancer is again on the increase.

Influenza was again responsible for most of the Pneumonia deaths.

NOTIFIABLE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

	Total	Under 1 yr.	1 5	5—15	15—25	25—45	45—65	Over	Deaths
Diphtheria	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	8	.	1	4	1	2	...	...	...
Pneumonia	13	...	4	1	...	4	4	..	7
Encephalitis Lethargica ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	23	...	5	6	2	6	4	...	7

This return is the lowest for the last five years ; the other years returns being—

	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Cases	51	45	35	25	23

So there has been a steady decrease, and this is not due to any increase in the necessary means of prevention of Infection.

There has been no epidemic this year.

Influenza has visited us twice and left its mark in deaths from Pneumonia and Encephalitis.

It must not be taken that out of 13 cases notified that seven died. Some of these deaths, as Septic Pneumonia, after operation, credited to us as deaths, but recurring in other places, are not notified in this district as cases.

Though an infectious disease I have never yet in this district ever found Pneumonia to show any signs of having the property of being conveyed from one person to another.

I would say the same of Encephalitis Lethargica.

VACCINATIONS.

None have been done by the M.O.H. Any that might have been done, as those required for foreign lands, have been done by him as Public Vaccinator.

TUBERCULOSIS.

It is when we come to consider this disease that we find no improvement in the number of cases notified, nor much in the number of deaths notified from it.

1921—Cases 18, Deaths 17. 1922—Cases 12, Deaths 12. 1923—Cases 19, Deaths 15.
1924—Cases 7, Deaths 16. 1925—Cases 32, Deaths 14.

PARTICULARS OF 1925.

			Cases Notified	1 5	5—15	15—25	25—45	45—65	over 65	Deaths
Respiratory	...	...	27	...	2	6	14	5	...	11
Other	...	...	5	1	...	2	1	1	...	3
			32	1	2	8	15	6	...	14

I have included in the number of cases notified all those that appear on my register for 1925, so it includes those notified by myself as being in the district, which have never been notified to me, but have come to my knowledge through the Register of Deaths. I am sorry to say that these unnotified cases which have died in this district during 1925 number seven, that is, half the number of deaths.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

The Officers consist of a Medical Officer of Health, D.P.H., who holds the same appointment under the adjacent Urban District of Saltash, and a Sanitary Inspector, a whole-time officer living in the district. There are no special officers, health visitors or special nurses employed.

Home Nursing is carried out by District Nurses, efficient, and of great service, who are supported by voluntary subscriptions. They are all general nurses.

Midwives.—The work of this kind is carried out by the same district nurses, so it may be taken that these nurses do not attend infectious cases. None are employed by the Sanitary Authority.

Hospitals supplied by the Authority.—One, a temporary building, is kept ready for any Small Pox cases, otherwise there are none.

Unmarried Mothers and illegitimate children.—There is no provision for these. When necessary the St. Germans Board of Guardians look after them.

The Poor Law House is not in the district.

Ambulance facilities.—None, but we are well served by St. John's Ambulance Corps, from Plymouth.

Clinics and treatment centres —None.

Disinfector —None.

Chemical work done – None.

Examination of any swabs of diphtheria is carried out by the Royal Institute of Public Health at the expense of the Sanitary Authority, and Anti-toxin is supplied for any cases for cure or prevention. This treatment is universal in this district.

Tubercular specimens or any other of public interest are examined at the Authority's expense. The M.O.H. has a free hand in these matters.

Cowsheds and Dairies.—No reports against these have been received by me. Although a Milk district, there is only one farm selling Graded Milk. The majority of farms are not up-to-date in Milk production.

INSPECTION OF FOOD.

No action has been taken as to Tuberculous Milk.

No licences have been granted for graded Milk.

No revocation of licences.

No Bacterical examination of Milk made.

MEAT.

854 notices have been received from persons slaughtering on private premises, most of which are not suitable for the work.

The carcases of 394 swine, 10 sheep, and 31 bovines have been examined.

Of these, 11 swine had Tubercle, chiefly of Submaxillary Glands, and one bovine had general Tubercle.

A few cases of ulcers and fluky livers were found.

The carcases condemned were voluntarily surrendered by the owners and conveyed to Plymouth destructor at their own expense.

The number of Slaughter-houses were and are as under.

	In 1920	In Jan., 25	In Dec., 25.
Registered	9	9	9
Licenced	2	2	2

ADOPTIVE ACTS OR PART OF ADOPTED BY THIS COUNCIL.

Sections 44, 169 and 170, Public Health Act, 1875.

Sections 157, Millbrook, St. Germans and St. Stephens, making of Byelaws with respect to new streets.

Section 44, whole district. Making of Byelaws with respect to cleansing footways, etc.

Section 169. Whole district (2nd paragraph) Town Improvement Clauses Act with respect to Slaughterhouses incorporated with 1875 Act.

Section 170 whole district. Notices to be affixed on Slaughterhouses " Licensed Slaughterhouse " or " Registered Slaughterhouse."

Section 29, Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890. Whole District. Duration of licenses for use and occupation of slaughterhouses.

THE GENERAL SANITARY OF THE DISTRICT IN DETAIL.

The District is divided into 14 Parishes.

1.—**ANTONY.** No. of acres 2847. Population in 1921, 799. Common Charges, £434 17s. 6d. Purely rural. The village of Antony has a supply of water at 4d. per 1,000 galls. from Antony Estate. This is sufficient. A sewer is laid through the village. The East of the district depends on wells for water, and various forms of middens for excrement disposal. The drainage of Wilcove is not satisfactory.

The number of Tubercle cases notified in this parish is seven.

2.—**BOTUSFLEMING.** Acres 1165. Population 1921, 257. Common charges £130 16s. This district is purely rural with no water supply, except one well of good quality and quantity, maintained by this authority. There is no sewerage system here.

Tubercular cases report in 1925, two in one house.

3.—**LANDRAKE.** Acres 3764. Population 1921, 610. Common charges £358 0s. 0d. Of Rural character, the only village being Landrake, in which we have a sewerage system draining into three cess pits, which are attended to. Here we have water in plenty from a pump and well situated in the village. The rest of the district depend on private wells and various forms of excrement disposal.

Tubercle cases reported for the year, one.

4.—**LANDULPH.** Acres 2669. Population 1921, 447. Common charges £299. In this parish we have Cargreen, a village without any sewerage system, and a water supply from wells and stand pipes.

Tubercular cases four, two in one house.

5.—**MAKER.** Acres 1441. Population 1921, 978. Common charges £439 8s. 0d. Rural, with one village called Kingsand, which with Cawsand, a village in Rame Parish, makes quite a large village, much used in summer as a place of holiday resort. With the exception of Kingsand there is no water supply or sewerage system, but in Kingsand itself there is a water supply from four distinct sources, on four different levels, which makes the regulation of the supply by gravity quite complicated. The village has to be divided into four districts.

The village is well sewered, and the old trouble of flooding corrected by the provision of a new sewer. House refuse is collected daily.

Tubercular cases four, all in Kingsand.

6.—**RAME.** Acres 1383. Population 1921, 2324. Common charges £275. This parish, in other parts Rural, contain the village of Cawsand on the sea. No water supply or sewerage in any part but Cawsand, where we have a supply sufficient as to volume and distribution. Full use of this supply is made in the absence of a reservoir. The last is now under consideration.

The sewerage system is good, gravity to the sea, but the outfalls often give trouble.

House refuse is collected daily.

Tubercle cases two.

7.—**MILLBROOK.** A village of closely crowded houses and narrow streets, has a very good water supply, and also a good sewerage system, with the exception of the liability of flooding at high tides and times of heavy rainfall. Being tucked away on high water level, almost at the foot of steep hills on all sides heavy rain quickly flood any sewers, especially when the tide is high.

House refuse is collected daily.

Tubercle cases seven.

8.—**PILLATON.** Acres 2945. Population 1921, 358. Common Charges £186. Purely rural, with no water supply and no sewers.

Tubercle cases 0.

9.—**QUETHIOCK.** Acres 4562. Population 336. Common Charges £274.

10.—**ST. GERMANS.** Acres 10321. Population 1921, 1985. Common Charges £1326. The largest Parish in our District, rural but containing several villages, as—

(a) St. Germans, with good piped water and a not satisfactory sewerage system.

(b) Polbathic. Good piped water supply.

(c) Tideford. Good water supply, sewerage fairly satisfactory.

(d) Hessenford. No water supply. Sewers poor.

(e) Downderry, the most important village, situated as it is on the sea, attracts many visitors for the summer months and shows some activity as to new buildings. After various extensions it now has a sufficient and good water supply. The sewerage system is good to a certain extent. The position and site is open, protected from North and East, and being far removed from railway and other means of communication, is a typical place for a summer's rest holiday, but, and this should not be, the place is not clean, because there is no system of house refuse collection. Refuse is now dumped by the road, in the approaches to other people's houses and to the beach itself, besides being deposited above high water mark, much to the disgust of residents and visitors. I have complaints of this now before me.

Downderry never seems to have any Infectious Disease. The only case I can trace during the last five years was a boy from a distant school who was sent home ill, with what turned out to be Diphtheria.

Tubercle cases in the Parish three, but none in Downderry.

11.—**ST. JOHNS.** Acres 806. Population 1921, 175. Common Charges £79. This is so small a Parish that a 1d. rate realises less than £3. It has no water supply. No sewers.

Tubercle cases, one.

12.—**ST. MELLION.** Acres 2984. Population 1921, 265. Common Charges, £132. Purely rural. The village, consisting of a few houses, has no sewers, and water is obtained from a well in the village, the pump to which is maintained by the District Council.

Tubercle cases, 0.

13.—**SHEVIOCK.** Acres 2674. Population 1921, 569. Common Charges £278. All rural, mostly unsewered and not supplied with water.

Portwrinkle has a good sewerage system, discharging into the sea. The water supply is sufficient. Several houses are being built here.

Crafthole has a sewerage system ; cess pits into which it enters are not satisfactory.

14.—**ST. STEPHENS.** Acres 6015. Population 1921, 2926. Common charges £1425, which encroaches on the Urban District of Saltash, is increasing in its number of houses more than any other part, and amalgamation proposals with Saltash are always being considered. This part on the Saltash boundary is partly sewered by a system ending in septic tanks and effluent to the Hamoaze, and partly in the sewers of the Urban District of Saltash. The Water supply of this part is obtained at 10d. per 1000 gallons from Saltash, which obtains it from Plymouth.

It is most unsatisfactory, as from 9 a.m. about often till 4 p.m. no water is in the pipes, and no water is available for these houses, and closets are unflushed. When the water does come it is for some time like chocolate, quite unfit for even washing in. This leads to an enormous waste, for which St. Stephens has to pay. Again, waste is caused by taps being left turned on to prevent any bursting in the pipes on the return

of the flow, which threatens the pipes, for it must not be lost sight of that at night the pressure is as of 100 feet head at the highest point of this distribution area.

House refuse is collected in this area weekly.

Tubercle cases one.

HOUSING.

Inspections made—

Alleged Nuisances	...	...	55
Examination of Closets	...	...	87
„ Drainage	...	...	94
„ Water Supply	...	...	85
Cowsheds and Dairies	...	..	59
Slaughter Houses ..	...	...	44
Infectious Disease ...	...	...	7
Workshops ...	...	...	9

Defects found and remedied —

Nuisances	...	...	27
Closet Accommdation	...	...	16
Drains	...	...	15
Cowsheds	...	...	4

During 1925, 23 new houses have been built. During the last five years 84 have been built of which 24 were of timber construction.

Cottage accommodation for farm workers is what the district wants, so many cottages being allowed to fall into decay.

HOUSING

1925.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total.	23
(b) As part of a Municipal Housing Scheme.	0

1. *Unfit Dwelling Houses.*

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for house defects under Public Health or Housing Acts.	367
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910.	43
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	1
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation.	9

2. *Remedy of Defects without service of formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers.	12
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3. *Action under Statutory Powers.*

A—Proceedings under section 26 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919	0
(1) Number of dwelling houses in which notices were served requiring repairs.	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit :—	
(a) by owners	0
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	0
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declaration by owners of intention to close	0

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied :—	24
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied :—	
(a) by owners	38
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	

C.—Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1909

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which closing orders were made	0
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which closing orders were determined, the dwelling houses having been rendered fit	0
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	0
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	0

The Sanitary Improvements in the District during the last five years have been

1. New sewerage system for Kingsand.
2. Supplementary water supply for DOWNDERRY.
3. New piped water supply for Polbathic.
4. Extension of water main to Wearde Building Estate in St. Stephens.
5. House to house collection of refuse in parts of St. Stephens.
6. Schemes adopted for assisting private enterprise in the erection of houses by a subsidy of £75 per house for 45 houses.

From this report it may be seen that during the year 1925 as also during the past 5 years, the health of the District has been remarkably good. Infectious disease hardly noticeable, with no epidemics.

A lot of work has been done, particularly by your Sanitary Inspector, and defects made good without recourse to legal proceedings or threatenings of such, there being quite a willingness to carry out necessary repairs by those responsible, on request by your Officers.

In larger schemes the District Council have shown a disposition to do all they can, as the sanitary improvements for the last five years show.

We can all congratulate ourselves on our sanitary conditions.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

R. T. MEADOWS, D.S.O., M.D., M.B., C.M., D.P.H.

